

Meeting Minutes
Delaware Population Consortium
May 3, 2006
10:00 a.m.
Haslet Armory
Dover, DE

In Attendance:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Kelly Crumpley – Kent Co. | Dan Blevins – WILMAPCO |
| Derrick Lightfoot, AICP – City of Wilmington | Janelle Cornwell – City of Dover |
| Mike Mahaffie – State Planning Coordination | Javier Arce – DSHA |
| Renee Dixon – State Planning Coordination | Barbara Gladders – Public Health |
| Ed Ratledge – University of Delaware | Mike Duross – DelDOT |
| Don Berry – Dept. of Education | |

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:05 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of March 23, 2006

Don Berry moved to approve the minutes of the March 23 meeting. Ed Ratledge seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Draft 2006 Projections

Ed Ratledge provided a spreadsheet for review. It presented the latest draft of the next round of projections, using new data from the Census Bureau to provide new benchmarks. He noted that the latest update does not change New Castle and Sussex Counties too much, but that the group needs to take a close look at the data for Kent County; in particular the migration data.

Ed noted that the growth in Kent continues to be driven by migration, though he does not expect the county to sustain the very high rate of migration that was seen in the years between 2000 and 2005. He expects that pace to level-off and then decrease somewhat, though he pointed out that is still almost twice the rate that was seen in earlier years.

There was a general discussion about possible constraints on future growth in Kent County. It was generally agreed that there are a high level of “unknowns” related to migration and the pace of growth in the County. These include factors such as gas prices, employment changes, housing prices and other factors that are difficult to predict.

Ed noted that there has been a recent increase in the length of time that housing is on the market, prior to being sold. This shows a softening in the housing market.

There was general discussion of the impacts of the recent strong pace of growth on a variety of infrastructure factors, including transportation, police/fire/EMS, wastewater treatment, and education.

It was generally agreed that the “shape” of the projected migration pattern looks like a reasonable attempt to account for recent slowing while maintaining the long-term increase in the projected rate of growth.

There was a discussion about the need to present the projections in context, showing the very slow rate – sometimes negative – of migration in previous years.

There was additional discussion on methods to estimate the age distribution of projected population growth. Ed will work with data from the Department of Education.

It was generally agreed that the current draft will serve as a starting point for the 2006 projections series, rather than as an update to the 2005 series. This will allow time to fine tune the projections and collect additional data.

Barbara Gladders noted that there are differences between the birth and death data set that the Census Bureau has released for Delaware and what the state shows in its records. It was suggested that the state seek a dialogue with the Bureau on this issue.

It was also suggested that the counties work over the next several months to gather data on certificates of Occupancy, by parcel, to inform the projections update as well as a new, sub-county projections effort that Ed will undertake with funding provided by the Office of Management and Budget.

Mike Mahaffie will work with the counties and will work with Dan Blevins to begin to set up data subcommittees to review sub-county data. These will be based on the successful subcommittee created by Dan at WILMAPCO. In Kent County, it was suggested, this group should be formed in cooperation with the Dover/Kent MPO. In Sussex County it will likely have to be formed in cooperation with the County Administration.

There was a brief discussion of ways to include an employment component in the sub-county projections. Ed noted that that will have to be a model-derived product, but may be possible.

Next meeting has been tentatively set for 10:00 a.m., June 21, 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m..